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HOUSE BILL 2996

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State of Washington

59th Legislature

2006 Regular Session

By Representatives Walsh, Haler, Kagi, Roberts, Hankins and Santos

Read first time 01/17/2006. Referred to Committee on Children & Family Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to trauma mitigation for children; adding a new  
2 section to chapter 74.13 RCW; creating new sections; and providing an  
3 expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that certain groups of  
6 children have dramatically higher rates of exposure to trauma,  
7 including children who have been abused or neglected, children in  
8 foster care, and children who witness domestic violence. The  
9 legislature also finds that there is a growing number of untreated  
10 trauma-affected children exhibiting severe stress reactions. When left  
11 untreated, the psychological distress caused by trauma in infancy and  
12 early childhood compromises healthy brain development and may result in  
13 a lifetime of lost potential. The legislature further finds that over  
14 the past two decades, significant theoretical, empirical, and clinical  
15 developments have emerged to guide practitioners in effectively  
16 treating trauma-exposed children. The legislature intends to create a  
17 pilot program to demonstrate the effectiveness of trauma mitigation  
18 strategies for the treatment of trauma-exposed children.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW  
2 to read as follows:

3        (1)    The trauma mitigation for children pilot program is  
4 established.    The pilot program shall be administered jointly by the  
5 children's administration and the division of mental health, within the  
6 department of social and health services.    The pilot program shall  
7 promote evidence-based trauma mitigation interventions for children who  
8 are removed from their home by child protective services.

9        (2)    The pilot program shall provide a structure for:

10        (a)    Implementing a regional trauma mitigation early intervention  
11 program to reduce the effects on children of exposure to trauma;

12        (b)    Creating a community-based response to the impacts of trauma on  
13 children; and

14        (c)    Identifying and strengthening local resources for  
15 developmentally appropriate services for children and families who have  
16 experienced trauma.

17        (3)    The pilot program shall be implemented at the safe harbor  
18 crisis nursery located in Kennewick, Washington.    One additional site  
19 may be selected on the basis of need as determined by:

20        (a)    The relative availability or unavailability of comparable  
21 services locally; and

22        (b)    The relative at-risk population within the community.

23        (4)    The pilot program shall consist of the following services for  
24 children:

25        (a)    For children birth to six years of age, and sibling groups with  
26 children under six years of age and siblings through age twelve,  
27 twenty-four hour group receiving care for a maximum of seven days.  
28 Receiving care under this subsection (4)(a) shall be designed to assist  
29 children in their transition to foster care;

30        (b)    For children not enrolled in school, posttrauma child day care  
31 for a maximum of thirty days after transition from group receiving care  
32 to foster care.    Child day care under this subsection (4)(b) includes  
33 play therapy, art therapy, music therapy, and physical activities as  
34 developmentally appropriate;

35        (c)    For school age siblings, posttrauma interventions once per week  
36 for a maximum of thirty days after transition from group receiving care  
37 to foster care; and

1 (d) Follow-up assessments of each child at the time of exit, and at  
2 six months and one year after exit, from the day care program or the  
3 weekly intervention program.

4 (5) The pilot program shall also provide for the dissemination of  
5 information and training for professionals, parents, foster parents,  
6 and caregivers regarding:

7 (a) The long-term impacts of exposure to trauma; and

8 (b) Evidence-based practices, strategies, and resources for  
9 mitigating the impact of exposure to trauma.

10 (6) In collaboration with the safe harbor crisis nursery, the  
11 children's administration and the division of mental health shall  
12 report to the legislature regarding the pilot program not later than  
13 September 1, 2009.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act expires December 31, 2009.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** If specific funding for the purposes of this  
16 act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by  
17 June 30, 2006, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and  
18 void.

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